



Governor's Office on Service and Volunteerism

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

2009 AMERICORPS*STATE FORMULA FUNDING

OPERATING GRANTS

EDUCATION AWARD ONLY GRANTS

PLANNING GRANTS

Due May 29, 2009

CORPORATION

FOR NATIONAL

AND

COMMUNITY

 SERVICE

Important Messages

Authority

The Governor's Office on Service and Volunteerism is the authorized pass-through agent for federal funds awarded by the Corporation for National and Community Service in accordance with the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. §§12571-12595) to eligible entities for the purpose of planning or operating an AmeriCorps program.

Corresponding Regulations

This *Request for Proposals* should be read together with the AmeriCorps regulations, 45 CFR Sections 2520 – 2550, which can be found on the national AmeriCorps website at the following link: http://www.americorps.gov/for_organizations/manage/index.asp.

Method of Submission

Applications to GOSV for this funding opportunity must be submitted through eGrants, the Corporation's online grants management system. Applications selected for funding will be forwarded to the Corporation by the GOSV using the eGrants system. This *Request for Proposals* includes instructions for entering applications into the eGrants system.

Universal Identifier

Applications must include a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number. The DUNS number is an identifier that helps the federal government to improve statistical reports on federal grants and cooperative agreements. The DUNS number does not replace your Employer Identification Number. DUNS numbers may be obtained at no cost by calling the DUNS number request line at (866) 705-5711 or by applying online at www.dnb.com.

Availability of Materials

This *Request* is available online at www.gosv.state.md.us.

Agency Contact

Inquiries about this funding opportunity and requests for technical assistance should be directed to: Teresa Garcia, Program Officer, Governor's Office on Service and Volunteerism, 410-767-6338; or email: tgarcia@gosv.state.md.us. The TTY number is 202-606-3472

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Funding Opportunity Detail

Department

Governor's Office on Service and Volunteerism (GOSV)

Governor's Commission on Service and Volunteerism (State Service Commission)

Announcement

Subject to federal appropriations for fiscal year 2009, the Governor's Office on Service and Volunteerism (GOSV) announces the availability of AmeriCorps*State Formula funds to award to eligible organizations to operate or plan to operate a Maryland AmeriCorps program.

Funding Opportunity Title

FY2009 AmeriCorps*State Formula Funding

Description of AmeriCorps Programs

This funding supports organizations (Grantees) in implementing programs that recruit and enroll participants, called AmeriCorps members, in full-time or less than full-time service positions that address unmet community needs. The Grantee administers a federally funded stipend to the AmeriCorps members to cover living expenses while they are serving, and certifies the members' eligibility to receive federally funded education awards at the conclusion of their terms of service. The Grantee creates a supportive team-based environment, or individual placements in which the members can perform and reflect upon meaningful direct service that assists individuals in need, or improves the natural or urban environment and strengthens communities.

Description of Education Benefits

Upon completion of a term of service, an AmeriCorps member is entitled to an education award commensurate with the service commitment the member fulfilled. A full-time member earns an award of \$4725 which can be used to pay educational expenses or to pay existing student loans. The education award is administered by a separate entity, the National Service Trust, and is paid directly to the educational or financial institution. Members have seven years from completion of their terms of service to utilize the education benefit. While a member is serving in AmeriCorps, qualified student loans may be put in Forbearance and the interest may be paid by the Trust. The value of the education benefit is not calculated into the program budget.

Childcare Benefit

Childcare expenses for income eligible members are paid during a member's term of service. The cost of childcare is not calculated into the program budget.

Healthcare Benefit

AmeriCorps Grantees must provide healthcare benefits to individuals who do not already possess healthcare benefits. The healthcare benefits must meet minimum guidelines. Grantees may choose their

own healthcare benefit provider; or they can utilize a national provider experienced in administering healthcare benefits for AmeriCorps programs.

Instrument Type

AMERICORPS PLANNING GRANT: Applicants new to AmeriCorps funding may apply for a planning grant of up to \$25,000.00 in order to prepare a full operating grant proposal for submission to the next funding cycle, due November 2009. A planning grant award does not guarantee the applicant will be awarded an operating grant in the next cycle. Acceptance of a planning grant will delay the proposed program launch at least until the Fall of 2010.

AMERICORPS OPERATING GRANT: Existing Formula funded Grantees should submit an Operating Grant proposal. New applicants may also submit an Operating Grant proposal.

AMERICORPS EDUCATION AWARD ONLY GRANT: For projects that will utilize less than full-time members and choose not to pay a living stipend, fixed award grants of \$600.00 per member are available to assist with program operating expenses. Education Award Only grantees are not subject to the same financial budgeting or reporting requirements.

Authority

The AmeriCorps program is authorized under the National and Community Service Act of 1990 (42 USC 12501 *et seq.*) and the implementing regulations found in 45 CFR parts 2510 through 2529.

Explanation

GOSV awards funds appropriated to the federal Corporation for National and Community Service (“the Corporation”). The Corporation allocates a proportion of its congressional appropriation annually, according to a population-based formula, to State Service Commissions. GOSV conducts a competitive review process to award the funding to eligible applicants.

Posted Date

March 16, 2009

Application Due Date

May 29, 2009 / 5:00 p.m. EST

Application Submission Format

Applications will be submitted through eGrants, the Corporation’s secure, web-based electronic grants management system. Instructions for submission of the grant application through eGrants are contained in this *Request for Proposals*.

Funding Notifications

Selected applicants will be notified by June 25, 2009

Projected Grant Award Date

GOSV anticipates issuing award packages in mid-July. Pre-award costs are not authorized. No program participants may be enrolled in advance of receipt of the award package.

Expected Number of Awards

Subject to congressional appropriations, GOSV anticipates awarding 12 – 15 grants.

Estimated Total Program Funding

Subject to congressional appropriations, GOSV anticipates awarding approximately \$1,500,000.

Award Ceiling

\$500,000

Award Floor

\$126,000

Matching Requirement

Yes. The minimum grantee share is 24% for the first three years, increasing gradually beginning in year four up to fifty per cent in the tenth year. The Grantee match contribution can be cash or in-kind. Existing Grantees should consult eGrants to determine their current match requirement.

Eligible Applicants

Public or private nonprofit faith based and community organizations; schools or school districts; institutions of higher education; and city and county government entities are eligible to apply. Organizations operating in under-resourced communities and meeting a demonstrated community need are invited to apply. Small, grass-roots, locally focused community organizations; as well as intermediary organizations intending to re-allocate resources locally are also encouraged to apply for grants.

Any organization described in Section 501 (c) (4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, 26 U.S.C. 501 (c)(4) that engages in lobbying activities is not eligible to apply, serve as a host site for participant placements, or act in any type of supervisory role in AmeriCorps programs.

An organization that currently operates a Corporation-funded program or is applying for other Corporation funding is an eligible applicant.

Organizations that have not received AmeriCorps funding in the past are welcome to apply for funding.

Minimum Living Allowance

\$11,400.00. The Corporation establishes the minimum stipend level for full-time AmeriCorps members. Grantees can elect to establish a member stipend between the minimum stipend level and the maximum stipend level.

Maximum Living Allowance

\$22,800.00. The maximum allowable stipend level is generally double the minimum.

Maximum Cost per Member Service Year (MSY)

\$12,600.00. Regardless of the stipend level the Grantee establishes, the maximum amount of federal funds a Grantee may request is \$12,600.00 per member. The maximum total federal share of the program operating budget can be calculated by multiplying \$12,600.00 by the number of full-time equivalent members (i.e. 10 half-time members equal five full-time equivalents.) For example, a Grantee that proposes to enroll 10 full-time (or 20 half-time) members may request up to \$126,000 in federal funds. More detailed budget instructions are contained in this *Request for Proposals*.

Prohibition against Multiple Awards

The same project cannot be funded by multiple AmeriCorps grants. If you have more than one application pending before GOSV and/or the Corporation for the same project, you must state this fact in each application. You will be required to withdraw all but one if two or more are approved for funding.

Order of Precedence

If there is any inconsistency between the AmeriCorps regulations, and the *Request for Proposals*, the AmeriCorps regulations 45 CFR §§ 2520–2550 take precedence over the *Request for Proposals*.

Technical Assistance to Applicants

GOSV hosts public information sessions to answer applicant questions about operating grant, planning grant, and Education Award Program grant funding opportunities. Applicants are encouraged to attend. The public information sessions schedule is contained on page 6 and posted at: www.gosv.state.md.us. Please check the website for updates to the schedule as additional sessions may be added.

This program is available to all, without regard to race, color, national origin, disability, age, sex, political affiliation, or, in most instances, religion.

Priority Funding Initiatives

Situated within the Governor's Office of Community Initiatives, GOSV's mission is to create, promote, and support service and volunteer opportunities that engage citizens to strengthen Maryland communities. In allocating funding, GOSV will give special consideration to projects that address one or a combination of six strategic initiatives, listed below, that meet critical needs of our state, achieve national service goals, and address community problems.

1. Mobilizing more volunteers. GOSV will invest in organizations that can effectively recruit, train, manage, and use volunteers who will ultimately have an impact on the success of their program. GOSV will increase the capacity of faith-based and other community organizations to mobilize volunteers in communities to meet critical needs. GOSV will support organizations that develop strong partnerships and collaborations with volunteer centers or other volunteer connector organizations in their service areas.

2. Ensuring a brighter future for all of Maryland's youth. GOSV will invest in organizations that provide caring adults as mentors for youth from disadvantaged circumstances, and opportunities for young people from disadvantaged circumstances to serve their communities. GOSV will support organizations that recruit these youth to serve in National Service programs.
3. Engaging students in communities. GOSV will invest in organizations that implement effective strategies for connecting their school, faculty, staff, and administration with their communities through service and volunteering. GOSV will support K-12 and higher education institutions that effectively incorporate service-learning into their curricula, and increase the number of college students engaged in community service and service-learning. GOSV will also help colleges and universities expand support for student service.
4. Harnessing the talents of older adults. GOSV will invest in programs that plan to capture the talents, skills, energy, and experience of Baby Boomers to meet local and national needs. GOSV improve the capacity of nonprofits to attract and retain Boomer volunteers via targeted training and technical assistance.
5. Helping communities recover from and prepare for disasters.
6. Engaging veterans as service recipients or providers.

Selection Process

GOSV will select Formula Grantees through a competitive process. To ensure a fair and open competitive review, GOSV will advertise a peer review opportunity. Selected peer reviewers will possess experience in community based program implementation and human services delivery or expertise in the issue areas of education, the environment, disaster preparedness and public safety, and other human needs. The peer review panel will be comprised of representatives of higher education, national service, youth programming, state and local government, and the nonprofit sector. Reviewers will receive orientation and training in order to assess the merits of the applications relative to the instructions contained in this *Request for Proposals*. Reviewer comments will inform but will not determine final funding decisions.

In addition, GOSV will compile performance histories of current Grantees and review past member recruitment and retention levels, timeliness of reports submission, demonstrated fulfillment of matching requirements, and compliance of Grantees with grant provisions.

The Governor's Commission on Service and Volunteerism will review assembled data and make final funding decisions. All applicants will be notified of the funding decisions. GOSV will submit the selected applications to the Corporation for ratification. GOSV program officers may call applicants to seek clarification, resolve questions, negotiate performance measures, and request revised budgets as part of the pre-award review process.

Once the Corporation has issued a Notice of Grant Award to GOSV, we will prepare an award package for Grantees. A Timeline is included in this document. We anticipate announcing the results of the FY2009 Formula funding review by June 25, 2009. The negotiated project start date may not occur prior to the award date. If you are applying as a new Grantee, you should not expect a start date prior to July 15, 2009.

Selection Criteria

In evaluating applications for funding, reviewers will assess program design, organizational capability, and cost-effectiveness and budget adequacy. The weights assigned to each category and sub-category are listed in the chart below. Reviewers will assess application narratives against these criteria and weight them accordingly. Please see the AmeriCorps regulations, 45 CFR §§ 2522.420–2522.448, for additional detail regarding these criteria.

Table 2: Basic Selection Criteria: Categories, Sub-Categories, and Respective Weights

Category	Percentage	Sub-Categories and Weights
Program Design	50%	Rationale and Approach – 10%
		Member Outputs and Outcomes – 20%
		Community Outputs and Outcomes – 20%
Organizational Capability	25%	No sub-categories
Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy	25%	Cost-Effectiveness – 15%
		Budget Adequacy – 10%

Section 2522.450 of the AmeriCorps regulations addresses types of programs or program models that may receive special consideration in the selection process. Section 2522.455 addresses how you can find out about additional priorities governing the selection process. Section 2522.470 addresses other factors or information the Corporation may consider in making final decisions.

Timeline

March 16, 2009

Release Notice of Funds Available, Request for Proposals

April 1, 2009

Public Information Session Prince George's Community College 1:30 pm

April 2, 2009	Public Information Session UMBC Shriver Center 10:30 am
May 29, 2009	All applications for funding due to GOSV
June 19, 2009	Commission review (tentative)
June 22, 2009	Submission of formula portfolio to the Corporation
July 2009	Distribution of award packets
August - September 2009	Commencement of program operations

INSTRUCTIONS FOR OPERATING GRANT APPLICATIONS

The AmeriCorps regulations include the selection criteria used to select applications for funding and other pertinent information (see Table 1, below).

Table 1: Program Requirements in the AmeriCorps Regulations

Requirements and Selection	Citation in the AmeriCorps Regulations
Member Service Activities	§2520.20 - §2520.55
Prohibited Activities	§2520.65
Tutoring Programs	§2522.900-2522.950
Matching Funds	§2521.35-2521.90
Member Benefits	§2522.240-2522.250
Calculating Cost Per Member Service Year (MSY)	§2522.485
Performance Measures	§2522.500-2522.650
Evaluation	§2522.500-2522.540 and §2522.700-2522.740
Selection Criteria and Selection Process	§2522.400-2522.475

Submitting Your Application in eGrants

Your application consists of the following components. Please make sure to complete each one.

- Applicant Info
- Application Info
- Narratives
- Performance Measures
- Documents
- Budget
- Review and Submit
- Survey on Ensuring Equal Opportunity for Applicants (Optional)

In eGrants, before Starting Section I, you will need to:

- Start a new Grant Application
- Select a Program Area (AmeriCorps)
- Select a NOFA (Commission AmeriCorps State Formula FY 2009)
- Select Maryland
- Select the Maryland Prime Application ID

A. Applicant Info

In eGrants, complete the Applicant Info Section (Attachment B). This section is particularly important for Corporation data collection and evaluation. Please take the time to reflect your program activities accurately in this section.

- In the Program Info Section, select existing program, or enter new if you are applying for the first time.
- If you are a new program, enter your contact information into the fields that appear.
- Select a primary Program Model, and a secondary Program Model, if appropriate.
- Then select characteristics that fit your project under Program Design, Program Location, and Program Focus. Enter or select a Program Director and Program Website URL.

B. Application Info

Information entered in the Applicant Info, Application Info, and Budget sections will populate the SF 424 Facesheet. If you are submitting your application in hard copy, you will find the SF 424 in Attachment A.

In the Application Info Section enter:

- Areas affected by your program.
- Enter requested project period start and end dates. You may not request a program start date earlier than July 15, 2009.
- If you are delinquent on any federal debt.
- State Application Identifier: Enter N/A.
- State Single Point of Contact: pre-filled No, this is not applicable.
- If you plan to request a waiver of the volunteer leveraging or match requirements.

C. Narratives

The narrative section of the application is your opportunity to convince reviewers that your project meets the selection criteria. Below are some general recommendations to help you present your project in a way the reviewers will find compelling and persuasive.

- Lead from your program strengths and be explicit. Do not make the mistake of trying to stretch your program description to fit each strategic initiative, special consideration, and priority articulated in the regulations or the *Request for Proposals*. Focus on the special considerations and priorities that apply to your program.
- Be clear and succinct. Reviewers are not interested in jargon, boilerplate, rhetoric, or exaggeration. They are interested in learning precisely what you intend to do, and how your project responds to the selection criteria presented below.

- Avoid circular reasoning. The problem you are addressing should not be described as the lack of the program you are proposing.
- Explain how. Avoid simply stating that the criteria will be met.
- Don't make assumptions. Even if you have received funding from the Corporation in the past, do not assume your reviewers know anything about you, your program, your partners, or your beneficiaries. Avoid overuse of acronyms.
- Use an impartial proofreader. Before you submit your application, let someone who is completely unfamiliar with your project read and critique the project narrative.

In eGrants, you will enter text for Section A. Rationale and Approach, B. Member Outputs and Outcomes, C. Community Outputs and Outcomes, D. Organizational Capacity, E. Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy, and F. Evaluation Plan. You may not exceed 71,000 characters in these three sections combined. The character count includes spaces and punctuation.

Please note that the Narratives Section also includes fields for Clarification Information, Amendment Justification, and Continuation Changes. These are not required fields. They will be used to enter information for clarification following review, request amendments once a grant is awarded, and enter changes in the narrative in continuation requests. Please enter N/A in these fields.

The selection criteria from the AmeriCorps regulations are included in the ruled boxes below. Reviewers will assess your application against the selection criteria. The bullets that follow the criteria are merely recommendations on how to best respond to the criteria.

Program Design

RATIONAL AND APPROACH

§ 2522. 425 What does the Corporation consider in assessing Program Design? (50%)

In determining the quality of your proposal's program design, the Corporation considers your rationale and approach for the proposed program, member outputs and outcomes, and community outputs and outcomes.

1. Rationale and Approach

(a) Rationale and approach (10%). In evaluating your rationale and approach, the Corporation considers the following criteria:

- (1) Whether your proposal describes and adequately documents a compelling need within the target community, including a description of how you identified the need;
- (2) Whether your proposal includes well-designed activities that address the compelling need, with ambitious performance measures, and a plan or system for continuous program self-assessment and improvement;
- (3) Whether your proposal describes well-defined roles for participants that are aligned with the identified needs and that lead to measurable outputs and outcomes; and
- (4) The extent to which your proposed program or project:

- (i) Effectively involves the target community in planning and implementation;
- (ii) Builds on (without duplicating), or reflects collaboration with, other national and community service programs supported by the Corporation; and
- (iii) Is designed to be replicated.

COMPELLING COMMUNITY NEED

- Describe the community need that you will address within the target community.
- Why did you select this need as your focus?
- How did you identify the need?
- Provide documentation of the need.
- If your program will operate at multiple sites, demonstrate a need in each community you propose to serve.

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES AND MEMBER ROLES

- Describe the activities you propose to address the need.
- What will be the member's roles in these activities, and how do the member roles relate to addressing the need as distinct from staff or volunteer roles? Discuss your program structure including number of members, where members will serve (for example, at the applicant organization or at local service sites). How do the types of member slots you are requesting (for example, full-time, half-time, quarter-time, etc.) align with the program design and activities? See Budget Instructions on page 25 for a chart that lists slot types, minimum hours served, and minimum and maximum living allowance.
- How will your plan for member development, training, and supervision contribute to achieving your desired outcomes?
- How will you ensure that members comply with rules on prohibited service activities? See 45 CFR § 2520.45, 45 CFR § 2520.65 and the AmeriCorps grant provisions for a list of prohibited service activities.
- How will receiving an AmeriCorps grant add value to your existing service activities?

MEASURABLE OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES

- Describe the measurable outputs and outcomes you expect to achieve as a result of your activities.
- What systems will you use to track these outputs and outcomes?
- **Note:** You will develop more detailed performance measures in eGrants, including what you will measure, how they will be measured, your targets for each year, and the data you will gather, during the post-review clarification period.

PLAN FOR SELF-ASSESSMENT AND IMPROVEMENT

- How will you track and evaluate your progress toward meeting and achieving your outputs and outcomes?
- What are your plans for continuous program improvement? How will you identify strengths and weaknesses, resolve problems, and gather feedback from and provide feedback to members, service sites, and partners

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- Describe how you involved the target community (or target communities) in identifying the needs and activities. Which community partners and stakeholders were involved? What roles did they play, and what were their responsibilities in the planning process?
- Explain how you will continue to engage your community partners and stakeholders throughout the three year program period. What will be their ongoing roles and responsibilities?

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAM

- How will your program build on (without duplicating), or reflect collaboration with, other national and community service programs supported by the Corporation and the state commissions in the state where you plan to operate? You can find a listing of Corporation-supported programs by state, including Senior Corps, AmeriCorps*Vista, and NCCC at http://www.americorps.org/about/role_impact/state_profiles.asp. The National Community Service Act prohibits duplication and displacement in SEC. 177. [42 U.S.C. 12637].

POTENTIAL FOR REPLICATION

- To what extent is your AmeriCorps program designed to be replicated by your organization or other organizations? What are your plans or strategies for replication?

MEMBER OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES

(b) Member outputs and outcomes (20%). In evaluating how your proposal addresses member outputs and outcomes, the Corporation considers the extent to which your proposal or program:

- (1) Includes effective and feasible plans for, or evidence of, recruiting, managing, and rewarding diverse members, including those from the target community, and demonstrating member satisfaction;
- (2) If you are a current grantee, has succeeded in meeting reasonable member enrollment and retention targets in prior grant periods, as determined by the Corporation;
- (3) Includes effective and feasible plans for, or evidence of, developing, training, and supervising members;
- (4) Demonstrates well-designed training or service activities that promote and sustain post-service, an ethic of service and civic responsibility, including structured opportunities for members to reflect on and learn from their service; and
- (5) If you are a current grantee, has met well-defined, performance measures regarding AmeriCorps members, including any applicable national performance measures, and including outputs and outcomes.

MEMBER RECRUITMENT AND SUPPORT

- Describe your plans for recruiting members for your program. What criteria will you use to select your members, including specific qualifications, characteristics, or backgrounds? What are your plans to ensure that your corps is diverse and includes members from the communities to be served?
- How will you assess member satisfaction? Describe your plan for providing incentives to members including opportunities for skill-building, professional development, education, activities promoting esprit de corps, member recognition, and rewards. What are your strategies to ensure that members complete their term of service (retention)?

Tutoring programs only:

Describe how your strategy for recruiting and selecting members complies with AmeriCorps requirements for member tutoring qualifications. Members who tutor must have a high school diploma, or a higher degree, or pass a proficiency test that the program has determined is effective in ensuring that members tutoring have the necessary skills to achieve program goals.

MEMBER DEVELOPMENT, TRAINING AND SUPERVISION

- Describe in detail your plans for orienting members to AmeriCorps, the community, their placement site, and to the service they will perform.
- How do you plan to train members to perform all the activities they will engage in and, as necessary, provide them with ongoing training throughout their terms? What is the timeline for this training? Identify the training curricula and materials you will use.
- Describe your plan for supervising members, and how it ensures that members will receive adequate support and guidance throughout their terms.

Tutoring programs only:

Describe how your strategy for training members complies with AmeriCorps requirements for member tutor training that is high quality and research based, consistent with the instructional program of the local agency or with state academic content standards, includes appropriate member supervision by individuals with expertise in tutoring, and provides specialized pre-service and in-service training consistent with the activities the member will perform.

ETHIC OF SERVICE AND CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY

Demonstrate how you will provide structured opportunities for participants to reflect on and learn from their service in order to promote a lifelong ethic of service and civic responsibility

Current Grantees Only: Enrollment

If you enrolled less than 100% of slots received during your last full year of program operation, provide an explanation, and describe your plan for improvement.

Current Grantees Only: Retention

If you were not able to retain all of your members during your last full year of program operation, provide an explanation, and describe your plan for improvement. While we recognize retention rates may vary among equally effective programs depending on the program model, we expect grantees to pursue the highest retention rate possible.

COMMUNITY OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES

(c) Community outputs and outcomes (20%). In evaluating whether your proposal adequately addresses community outputs and outcomes, the Corporation considers the extent to which your proposal or program:

(1) Is successful in meeting targeted, compelling community needs, or if you are a current grantee, the extent to which your program has met its well-defined, community-based performance measures, including any applicable national performance measures, and including outputs and outcomes, in previous grant cycles, and is continually expanding and increasing its reach and impact in the community;

(2) Has an impact in the community that is sustainable beyond the presence of Federal support (For example, if one of your projects is to revitalize a local park, you would meet this criterion by showing that after you have completed your revitalization project, the community will continue its upkeep on its own);

(3) Generates and supports volunteers to expand the reach of your program in the community; and

(4) Enhances capacity-building of other organizations and institutions important to the community, such as schools, homeland security organizations, neighborhood watch organizations, civic associations, and community organizations, including faith-based organizations.

SUSTAINABILITY

Outline your plans for ensuring that the impact of your program in the community is sustainable beyond the presence of federal support. For example, you might describe how your community relationships will lead to community investment in the program's continued operation; how you will diversify your funding sources to include a wide range of stakeholders (such as state, local, and private sector funding); how your strategies for recruiting and supporting volunteers will sustain member activities after your AmeriCorps grant ends; or how the community will maintain your project once it is completed.

VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT AND SUPPORT

- Describe how your program will use volunteers to expand the reach of the program in the community. How will you recruit, support, and recognize volunteers? Identify how many volunteers you expect to recruit and the number of hours of service they will provide, in total and on average. Will these volunteers be episodic (committing to one-time or occasional events) or ongoing (committing to a regular, ongoing role in the program)? If selected for funding, you will be expected to report on your actual volunteer recruitment levels.
- Describe the role that members will play in your volunteer recruitment and support efforts.
- If you are requesting a waiver of the requirement to recruit or support volunteers (see 45 C.F.R § 2520.35), explain the basis for your request in the Waiver Request Justification field, which is in the Application Info Section in eGrants. If you are submitting a hard copy application, explain the basis for your waiver request in the program narrative.

CAPACITY BUILDING:

- Describe how your program will enhance the capacity of other organizations and institutions important to the community, such as schools, homeland security organizations, neighborhood watch organizations, civic associations, and community organizations, including faith-based organizations. What roles will members play in your capacity-building activities?

Organizational Capability

§ 2522.430 How does the Corporation assess my organizational capability? (25%)

(a) In evaluating your organizational capability, the Corporation considers the following:

(1) The extent to which your organization has a sound structure including:

(i) The ability to provide sound programmatic and fiscal oversight;

(ii) Well-defined roles for your board of directors, administrators, and staff;

(iii) A well-designed plan or systems for organizational (as opposed to program) self-assessment and continuous improvement; and

(iv) The ability to provide or secure effective technical assistance.

(2) Whether your organization has a sound record of accomplishment as an organization, including the extent to which you:

(i) Generate and support diverse volunteers who increase your organization's capacity;

(ii) Demonstrate leadership within the organization and the community served; and

(iii) If you are an existing grantee, you have secured the matching resources as reflected in your prior grant awards;

(3) The extent to which you are securing community support that recurs, expands in scope, or increases in amount, and is more diverse, as evidenced by—

(i) Collaborations that increase the quality and reach of service and include well-defined roles for faith-based and other community organizations;

(ii) Local financial and in-kind contributions; and

(iii) Supporters who represent a wide range of community stakeholders.

(b) In applying the criteria in paragraph (a) of this section to each proposal, the Corporation may take into account the following circumstances of individual organizations:

(1) The age of your organization and its rate of growth; and

(2) Whether your organization serves a resource-poor community, such as a rural or remote community, a community with a high poverty rate, or a community with a scarcity of philanthropic and corporate resources.

Sound Organizational Structure

ABILITY TO PROVIDE SOUND PROGRAMMATIC AND FISCAL OVERSIGHT

Provide a brief history of your organization. What year was your organization established? Describe your organization's experience in the proposed areas of activity and your experience operating and overseeing a program comparable to the one proposed. Include specific examples of your prior accomplishments and outcomes. Describe your capacity to manage a federal grant and to provide on-site monitoring of the financial and other systems required to administer an AmeriCorps grant.

If you are proposing a multi-site program:

- Explain how you are able to support and oversee service sites.
- Describe your process for selecting service sites and ensuring they have adequate programmatic and financial capabilities. How will your site selection process incorporate the criteria required by the AmeriCorps regulations 45 CFR § 2522.475 (quality, innovation, sustainability, quality of leadership, past performance, community involvement), and the special considerations found in 45 CFR § 2522.450 (program models, program activities, and programs supporting distressed communities)?
- What are your current or previous programmatic and funding relationships with the sites?
- Describe your plans for monitoring site compliance with fiscal and programmatic requirements.
- How will you develop connections among the sites through common program elements or activities to ensure that your overall mission and vision for the AmeriCorps program is maintained at each site?

BOARD OF DIRECTORS, ADMINISTRATORS, AND STAFF

- Describe your organization's management and staff structure and how the board of directors (if applicable), administrators, and staff members will be used to support your program.
- Identify the key program and fiscal positions responsible for your proposed program. Describe the relevant background and experience of all staff members working on the project and their respective roles, or your plans to recruit, select, train, and support additional staff, and their roles.

PLAN FOR SELF-ASSESSMENT OR IMPROVEMENT

How does your organization conduct ongoing internal assessment and improvement of its overall—not program-specific—systems, structure, staffing, and other capacities to ensure that it remains sound and well managed?

PLAN FOR EFFECTIVE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

- How do you plan to provide or secure any needed financial and programmatic technical assistance for your program, and if applicable, your service sites? What are your plans for providing financial and programmatic orientation, and training and technical assistance to your program and service sites?
- Explain how you will identify and respond to your programs' and, if applicable, your service sites' ongoing training and technical assistance needs.

Sound Record of Accomplishment as an Organization

VOLUNTEER GENERATION AND SUPPORT

Describe how your organization recruits and supports a diverse group of volunteers to increase your own organizational capacity.

ORGANIZATIONAL AND COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

Provide examples of how you have demonstrated leadership as an organization and in the community you serve. For example, describe awards received by the organization or individuals within the organization, public positions of leadership such as staff serving on other community boards, or participation in community events, task forces, and other community activities.

Current Grantees Only: Success in Securing Match Resources

Describe your successes and challenges in securing match resources during your current three-year grant cycle and, if applicable, during the period of previous awards.

Success in Securing Community Support

COLLABORATION

Describe any collaborations you have developed that increase the quality and reach of services you provide. What roles have community organizations, including faith-based organizations, played in these collaborations?

LOCAL FINANCIAL AND IN-KIND CONTRIBUTION

Discuss examples of how local contributions have continued over time, expanded in scope, increased in amount, or become more diverse.

WIDE RANGE OF COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS

Describe community stakeholders in your organization. How has non-financial support from your community stakeholders continued over time, expanded in scope, increased in amount, or become more diverse?

Special Circumstances:

In applying the organizational capability criteria to each proposal, reviewers may also take into account the following circumstances of individual organizations:

- The age of your organization and its rate of growth.
- Whether your organization serves a resource-poor community, such as a rural or remote community, a community with a high poverty rate, or a community with a scarcity of philanthropic and corporate resources.

If you feel that any of the circumstances stated above have an impact on your organizational capability that has not already been discussed, please describe.

Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy

§ 2522.435 How does the Corporation evaluate the cost-effectiveness and budget adequacy of my program? (25%)

(a) In evaluating the cost-effectiveness (15%) and budget adequacy (10%) of your proposed program, the Corporation considers the following:

(1) Whether your program is cost-effective based on:

- (i) Your program's proposed Corporation cost per MSY, as defined in §2522.485; and
- (ii) Other indicators of cost-effectiveness, such as:

(A) The extent to which your program demonstrates diverse non-Federal resources for program implementation and sustainability;

(B) If you are a current grantee, the extent to which you are increasing your share of costs to meet or exceed program goals; or

(C) If you are a current grantee, the extent to which you are proposing deeper impact or broader reach without a commensurate increase in Federal costs; and

(2) Whether your budget is adequate to support your program design.

(b) In applying the cost-effectiveness criteria in paragraph (a) of this section, the Corporation will take into account the following circumstances of individual programs:

(1) Program age, or the extent to which your program brings on new sites;

(2) Whether your program or project is located in a resource-poor community, such as a rural or remote community, a community with a high poverty rate, or a community with a scarcity of corporate or philanthropic resources;

(3) Whether your program or project is located in a high-cost, economically distressed community, measured by applying appropriate Federal and State data; and

(4) Whether the reasonable and necessary costs of your program or project are higher because they are associated with engaging or serving difficult-to-reach populations, or achieving greater program impact as evidenced through performance measures and program evaluation.

(c) The indicators in paragraphs (a)(1)(i) and (a)(1)(ii)(B) of this section do not apply to Education Award Program applicants.

COST EFFECTIVENESS

Corporation Cost per Member Service Year (MSY):

- The Corporation cost per MSY is determined by dividing the Corporation's share of budgeted grant costs by the number of MSYs you are requesting in your grant. It does not include child care or the cost of the education award.
- One MSY is equivalent to at least 1700 service hours, a full-time AmeriCorps position.
- The Corporation cost per MSY will be automatically calculated once you enter your budget in eGrants.
- The maximum cost per MSY allowable is \$12,600.00.
- Cost effectiveness will be evaluated by analyzing cost per MSY in relation to your program design. If you request above the maximum, please justify. This is rarely approved.

Diverse Non-Federal Support:

- Demonstrate how your program has or will obtain diverse non-federal resources for program implementation and sustainability.
- Include a discussion of the non-Corporation resource commitments (in-kind and cash) that you have obtained, the additional commitments you plan to secure, and how you will secure them. In the budget, you must list the sources of your match funds.

Current Grantees Only: Decreased Reliance on Federal Support

- Describe the extent to which you are increasing your share of costs to meet or exceed program goals, or the extent to which you are proposing deeper impact or broader reach without a commensurate increase in federal costs.

BUDGET ADEQUACY

Discuss the adequacy of your budget to support your program design including how it is sufficient to support your program activities and is linked to your desired outputs and outcomes.

For EAPs Only: EAP applicants must describe the costs that will not be covered by Corporation funding. These costs might include staff salaries and benefits, travel, evaluation, living allowances or salaries for AmeriCorps members, supplies, and equipment. You will not be required to track or report on these expenditures. Reviewers will consider this information to assess the adequacy of your budget to support your program design.

The Corporation cost per MSY and the extent to which a current EAP grantee is increasing its share of costs to meet or exceed programs goals will not be considered in assessing an EAP applicant's cost

effectiveness. However, all the other indicators described in this section will apply and the cost effectiveness/budget adequacy section still equals 25% of the selection criteria weight.

D. Evaluation Summary or Plan

Your evaluation requirements are different depending on the amount of your grant, as described in the AmeriCorps Regulations, Section 2522.710:

- If you are State grantee (other than an Education Award Program grantee), and your average annual Corporation program grant is \$500,000 or more, you must arrange for an independent evaluation of your program, and you must submit the evaluation with any application to the Corporation for competitive funds as required in §2522.730 of this subpart.
- If you are State grantee whose average annual Corporation program grant is less than \$500,000, or an Education Award Program grantee, you must conduct an internal or an external evaluation of your program, and you must submit the evaluation with any application to the Corporation for competitive funds as required in §2522.730 of this subpart.

E. Amendment Justification

Enter N/A. This field will be used if you are awarded a grant and need to amend it. Please delete any information previously entered in the field before entering new information.

Clarification Information

Enter N/A. This field will be used to enter information that requires clarification in the post-review period. Please delete any information previously entered in the field before entering new information.

Continuation Update

Enter N/A. This field will be used to enter changes in your narratives in your continuation requests. Please delete any information previously entered in the field before entering new information.

F. Performance Measures

Service Categories

In eGrants, the service categories are located in the Performance Measures Section. In this section you will select issue areas and service categories that describe your program activities. First select an issue area, and then choose service categories from the pull down menu. When you have selected all applicable service categories, indicate which service category is the primary and which is the secondary in importance to your program. Only one service category can be indicated as the primary, and one as the secondary.

Performance Measures

Before you complete the Performance Measures, please review 45 CFR §§ 2522.500– 2522.650. The Performance Measure worksheet in Attachment D is provided as a tool to help you think through the development of performance measures and assemble the information in eGrants. You may find the

[Performance Measurement Toolkit](http://www.nationalserviceresources.org/star/ac-program-toolkit), on the Corporation's web site useful in developing your performance measures (<http://www.nationalserviceresources.org/star/ac-program-toolkit>).

You are required to align at least one set of performance measures in your primary service category. In eGrants, you will align the measures by entering three different Result Types and Result Statements for one Performance Measurement Title. The three Result Types are Output, Intermediate Outcome, and End Outcome.

In order to align a set of performance measures in eGrants:

- First select Add Performance Measure in eGrants.
- Enter the Title, the Measure Category, and the Service Category from the pull down menus.
- Enter a sentence or two on Needs and Activities, and Result Type.
- For the Output Result Type, enter a Result Statement, Indicators, Targets, Number or Percentage, Instruments, and Performance Measure Statement.
- Add New Result for the Intermediate Outcome and complete the pertinent fields.
- Do not Add New Performance Measure in order to add an Intermediate or End Outcome for your aligned measure.
- Finally, Add New Result for the End Outcome and complete the pertinent fields.
- Once you have aligned one set of measures, i.e., completed three Result Types (Output, Intermediate Outcome and End Outcome) for one Performance Measurement Title, you may continue to Add New Performance Measures as appropriate for your program design.

G. Documents

In addition to your application submitted in eGrants, you are required to provide your evaluation, as described on page 18, and labor union concurrence (if necessary) in hard copy or e-mail, as part of your application. After you have submitted the documents, change their status in eGrants from the default "Not Sent" to the applicable status ("Sent," "Not Applicable," or "Already on File at CNCS"). In the event of difficulties submitting an application in eGrants, please see the *Notice* for instructions.

EVALUATION

Submit any completed evaluation report as described in C., below. Select Evaluation and select Sent once you have submitted a completed evaluation report.

LABOR UNION CONCURRENCE

If a program applicant:

- (1) Proposes to serve as the placement site for AmeriCorps members; and
- (2) Has employees engaged in the same or substantially similar work as that proposed to be carried out by AmeriCorps members; and
- (3) Those employees are represented by a local labor organization

then the program applicant's application must include the written concurrence of the local labor organization representing those employees.

If this applies to you, please select "Enter New," name the new document "Labor Union Concurrence," and enter status Sent.

Submission Instructions for Program Evaluations and Labor Union Concurrence

Send hard copy information to:

Governor's Office on Service and Volunteerism
301 W. Preston Street, 15th Floor
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

H. Budget

Education Award Only Applicants: Use the Budget Instructions and Worksheet on page 32

OVERVIEW OF KEY BUDGET REQUIREMENTS

Program requirements, including requirements on match, are located in the AmeriCorps regulations, modified by 2008 appropriations language, and summarized below. The appropriations language includes an important change in how AmeriCorps State and National programs match federal funds. It replaces the regulatory 15% minimum member support and 33% minimum program operating match with a single overall minimum match of 24% for the first three-year funding period. Starting with the second three-year cycle, match gradually increases every three years to 50% by year ten, according to the minimum overall share chart found in 45 CFR 2521.60. Current grantees remain where they are in terms of match requirements. For example, a grantee entering the sixth year of funding will be required to match at 34% as specified in the chart.

Table 3: Match Requirements in the AmeriCorps Regulations

Competition	Match Requirement
State and Territory Competitive	Minimum grantee share is 24% of program costs for the first three years. Overall grantee share of total program costs increases gradually beginning in Year 4 to 50% by the tenth year of funding and any year thereafter.
State EAP	Grantee pays all program costs over \$600 per MSY provided by the Corporation.

- Equipment costs must not exceed 10% of the total Corporation share.
- Administrative costs must not exceed 5% of the total Corporation funds requested.

- If you are applying for the first time, you must match with cash or in-kind contributions at least 24% of the project's total Operating Costs (Section I) plus Member Costs (Section II) plus Administrative Costs (Section III). If you are currently funded, your required matching level will appear at the bottom of your eGrants budget form.
- The acceptable sources of matching funds are federal, state, local, private sector, and/or other funds in accordance with applicable AmeriCorps requirements.
- In Sections I, II, and III of the budget, you should clearly and specifically identify the source and total dollar amount of cash match from private, state and local and federal funds, and the source and total amounts of in-kind support. Define all acronyms the first time they are used.

Note: The Corporation's legislation permits the use of non-Corporation federal funds as match for the grantee share of the budget. However, it may be advisable to discuss your intention to report expenditures as costs on both grants with the other agency (matching on the CNCS grant and direct on the other agency's grant).

PREPARING YOUR BUDGET

Your proposed budget should be sufficient to allow you to perform the tasks described in your proposal narrative. Reviewers will consider the information you provide in this section in their assessment of the Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy selection criterion.

Follow the detailed budget instructions, below, to prepare your budget. We recommend that you prepare your budget in the same order as indicated in the Budget Worksheets in Attachments F and G. The Budget Checklist in Attachment H is a resource for you to ensure your budget is complete. eGrants will create the budget and the budget narrative automatically from the detailed budget information you enter. Once you have entered your budget information in eGrants you will be asked to validate your budget, and eGrants will check your submission for errors.

As you prepare your budget:

- All the amounts you request must be defined for a particular purpose. Do not include miscellaneous, contingency, or other undefined budget amounts.
- Your detailed budget narrative must provide a full explanation of the proposed costs including their purpose.
- Present the basis for all calculations in the form of an equation.
- Do not include unallowable expenses, e.g., entertainment costs (which include food and beverage costs) unless they are justified as an essential component of an activity.
- Do not include fractional amounts (cents).

Please refer to the relevant OMB Circulars on allowable costs for further guidance. The OMB circulars are online at www.whitehouse.gov/OMB/circulars.

- A-21 - Cost Principles for Educational Institutions, 2 CFR 220
- A-87 - Cost Principles for State, Local, and Indian Tribal Governments, 2 CFR 225
- A-122 - Cost Principles for Non Profit Organizations, 2 CFR 230

Programs must comply with all applicable federal laws, regulations, and OMB circulars for grant management, allowable costs, and audits, including providing audits to the A-133 clearinghouse if they expend over \$500,000 in federal funds, as required in OMB Circular A-133.

I. Review, Authorize, and Submit

eGrants requires that you review and verify your entire application before submitting, by completing the following sections in eGrants:

- Review
- Authorize
- Assurances and Certifications
- Verify and Submit

Read the Authorization, Assurances, and Certifications carefully. Complete each section of the Assurances and Certifications.

The person who authorizes the application must be the applicant's authorized representative. A copy of the governing body's authorization for this official representative to sign must be on file in the applicant's office.

Be sure to check your entire application to make sure that there are no errors before submitting it. eGrants will also generate a list of errors if there are sections that need to be corrected prior to submission when you verify.

J. Survey on Ensuring Equal Opportunity for Applicants

The Corporation and other federal agencies are collaborating with the White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives to conduct a survey of organizations that apply for federal funding. The purpose of this voluntary information collection is to compile statistics on the types of organizations that apply to the Corporation for funds, such as number of employees, budget size, and self-identification as a faith-based/religious organization or a non-religious community-based organization.

This form is for applicants that are nonprofit private organizations, not including private universities. All information from the attached survey will be confidential and the responses will be aggregated in-house for a summary report. Information provided on your form will not be released and will not be considered in any way in making funding decisions.

There are two ways to complete the survey: (1) while preparing your application; and (2) after submitting your application.

- 1) To complete the survey while preparing your application, go to the eGrants Main Menu, click on Enter Survey on Ensuring Equal Opportunity, provide the requested information and submit.
- 2) If you submit your grant application without completing the survey, a pop-up box will appear and ask you if you would like to complete the survey. You may select Yes, No, or Remind Me Later. If

you select Remind Me Later, you will be asked to fill in the survey next time you attempt to submit an application to the Corporation for National and Community Service.

If you are submitting an application in hard copy, the survey forms and instructions are found in the Attachment J.

DETAILED BUDGET INSTRUCTIONS

These instructions do not apply to applicants for State EAP grants.

Source of Match

In the “Source of Match” field that appears at the beginning of Sections I, II, and III, enter a brief description of the Source of Match, the amount, the match classification (Cash, In-kind, or Not Available) and Match Source (State/Local, Federal, Private, Other or Not Available). Define any acronyms the first time they are used.

Section I. Program Operating Costs

Complete Section I, Program Operating Costs, of the Budget Worksheet by entering the “Total Amount,” “CNCS Share,” and “Grantee Share” for Parts A-I, as follows:

A. PERSONNEL EXPENSES

Under “Position/Title Description,” list each staff position separately and provide a brief 5 or 6 word position description, salary, and percentage of effort devoted to this award. Because the purpose of this grant is to enable and stimulate volunteer community service, do not include the value of direct community service performed by volunteers. However, you may include the value of volunteer services contributed to the organization for organizational functions such as accounting, audit work, or training of staff and AmeriCorps members.

B. PERSONNEL FRINGE BENEFITS

Under “Purpose/Description,” identify the types of fringe benefits to be covered and the costs of benefit(s) for each staff position. Allowable fringe benefits typically include FICA, Worker’s Compensation, Retirement, SUTA, Health and Life Insurance, IRA, and 401K. You may provide a calculation for total benefits as a percentage of the salaries to which they apply or list each benefit as a separate item. If a fringe amount is over 30%, please list separately. Holidays, leave, and other similar vacation benefits are not included in the fringe benefit rates but are absorbed into the personnel expenses (salary) budget line item. Uncommon or exceptionally high-cost benefits should be itemized and justified.

C. 1. STAFF TRAVEL

Describe the purpose for which program staff member will travel. Provide a calculation to include costs for airfare, transportation, lodging, per diem, and other travel-related expenses multiplied by the number of trips/staff. Where applicable, identify the current standard reimbursement rate(s) of the organization for mileage, daily per diem, and similar supporting information. Only domestic travel is allowable.

We expect applicants to include funds in this line item for travel for staff and site staff to attend Corporation-sponsored technical assistance meetings. There are two to three such opportunities per year, including opportunities for new grantee orientation, financial training, and the National Conference on Service and Volunteering.

C. 2. MEMBER TRAVEL

Describe the purpose for which members will travel. Provide a calculation to include costs for airfare, transportation, lodging, per diem, and other related expenses for members to travel outside their service location or between sites. Costs associated with local travel, such as bus passes to local sites, mileage reimbursement for use of car, etc., should be included in this budget category. Where applicable, identify the current standard reimbursement rate(s) of the organization for mileage, daily per diem, and similar supporting information.

D. EQUIPMENT

Equipment is defined as tangible, non-expendable personal property having a useful life of more than one year AND an acquisition cost of **\$5,000 or more per unit** (including accessories, attachments, and modifications). Any items that do not meet this definition should be entered in E. Supplies below. Purchases of equipment are limited to 10% of the total Corporation funds requested. If applicable, show the unit cost and number of units you are requesting. Provide a brief justification for the purchase of the equipment under Item/Purpose.

E. SUPPLIES

Include the amount of funds to purchase consumable supplies and materials, including member service gear and equipment that does not fit the definition above. You must individually list any single item costing \$1,000 or more. Except for safety equipment, grantees may only charge the cost of member service gear to the federal share if it includes the AmeriCorps logo. Grantees may also add the AmeriCorps logo to their own local program uniform items using federal funds. All safety gear may be charged to the federal share, regardless of whether it includes the AmeriCorps logo. All other service gear must be purchased with non-federal funds.

F. CONTRACTUAL AND CONSULTANT SERVICES

Include costs for consultants related to the project's operations, except evaluation consultants, who will be listed in Section H., below. Payments to individuals for consultant services under this grant may not exceed \$540 per day (excluding costs for indirect expenses, travel, supplies, etc.). The \$540 daily rate is a ceiling, and we anticipate budgeted daily rates at considerably lower levels. Indicate the daily rate for consultants you are proposing to use and their contractual services. Indicate the daily rate, number of days, and total cost.

G. 1. STAFF TRAINING

Include the costs associated with training staff on project requirements and training to enhance the skills staff need for effective project implementation, i.e., project or financial management, team building, etc. If using a consultant(s) for training, indicate the estimated daily rate, not to exceed the daily rate limit.

G. 2. MEMBER TRAINING

Include the costs associated with member training to support them in carrying out their service activities, for example, orientation, project-specific skills such as age-appropriate tutoring, CPR, or ecosystems and the environment. You may also use this section to request funds to support training in Life After AmeriCorps. If using a consultant(s) for training, indicate the estimated daily rate, not to exceed the daily rate limit.

H. EVALUATION

Include costs for project evaluation activities, including additional staff time or subcontracts, use of evaluation consultants, purchase of instrumentation, and other costs specifically for this activity not budgeted in Personnel Expenses. This cost **does not** include the daily/weekly gathering of data to assess progress toward meeting performance measures, but is a larger assessment of the impact your project is having on the community, as well as an assessment of the overall systems and project design. Indicate daily rates of consultants, where applicable.

I. OTHER PROGRAM OPERATING COSTS

Allowable costs in this budget category should include when applicable:

- Background checks of members and grant-funded staff who have recurring access to vulnerable populations, i.e., children, the elderly, disabled, etc.
- Office space rental for projects operating without an approved indirect cost rate agreement that covers office space. For national office space, rental may be unallowable; check relevant OMB Circulars. If space is budgeted and it is shared with other projects or activities, the costs must be equitably pro-rated and allocated between the activities or projects.
- Utilities, telephone, Internet and similar expenses that are specifically used for AmeriCorps members and AmeriCorps project staff, and are not part of the organizations indirect cost/admin cost allocation pool.
- Recognition costs for members. List each item and provide a justification in the budget narrative. Gifts and/or food in an entertainment/event setting are not allowable costs.

Section II. Member Costs

Member Costs are identified as “Living Allowance” and “Member Support Costs.” Your required match can be federal, state, local, or private sector funds.

In the “Source of Match” box, enter the total amount of cash and in-kind match under columns for “Private,” “State and/or local,” and “Federal.” Then, for each amount entered, identify the source of the

matching funds or in-kind contributions by entering text under “Sources.” Define acronyms the first time they are used.

A. LIVING ALLOWANCE

The narrative should clearly identify the number of members you are supporting by category (i.e., full-time, half-time, reduced-half-time, quarter-time, minimum-time, 1st and 2nd Years of 2-year half-time) and the amount of living allowance they will receive, allocating appropriate portions between the Corporation’s share (CNCS Share) and grantee match (Grantee Share).

Members – Enter the total number of members you are requesting in each category. Enter the amount of the living allowance for each type of member. Enter the number of members for which you are not requesting funds for a living allowance, but for which you request education awards.

Table 4: Minimum and Maximum Living Allowance

Term of Service	Minimum Number of Hours	Minimum Living Allowance	Maximum Living Allowance	MSY
Full-time	1700	\$11,400	\$22,800	1.000
One Year Half-Time	900	N/A	\$12,070	0.500
Two Year Half-Time	900	N/A	\$12,070	0.25*
Reduced Half-Time	675	N/A	\$9,050	0.381
Quarter-Time	450	N/A	\$6,035	0.2646
Minimum-Time	300	N/A	\$4,025	0.2117

Notes:

1. There is no requirement to pay a living allowance to less than full-time members.

2. The amount of the maximum for less than full-time living allowance is rounded to the nearest dollar.

* For a two year half-time position, the living allowance can be split between two years, e.g. 0.250 in Year 1 and 0.250 in Year 2. The total MSY factor is .500.

B. MEMBER SUPPORT COSTS

Consistent with the laws of the state of Maryland, you must provide members with the benefits described below.

1. WORKER’S COMPENSATION

Maryland AmeriCorps programs may choose to pay for Worker’s Compensation benefits. If you do not choose to pay worker’s compensation, you must obtain Occupational, Accidental, Death and Dismemberment coverage for members to cover in-service injury or incidents.

2. HEALTH CARE

You must offer health care benefits to full-time members in accordance with AmeriCorps requirements. Except as stated below you may not pay health care benefits to less-than-full-time members with Corporation funds. You may choose to provide health care benefits to less-than-full-time members from other sources (i.e., non-federal). Less-than-full-time members who are serving in a full-time capacity for a sustained period of time (such as a full-time summer project) are eligible for health care benefits. In your budget narrative, indicate the number of members who will receive health care benefits. The Corporation will not pay for dependent coverage.

Section III. Administrative/Indirect Costs

DEFINITIONS

Administrative costs are general or centralized expenses of the overall administration of an organization that receives Corporation funds and do not include particular project costs. These costs may include administrative staff positions. For organizations that have an established indirect cost rate for federal awards, administrative costs mean those costs that are included in the organization's indirect cost rate agreement. Such costs are generally identified with the organization's overall operation and are further described in Office of Management and Budget Circulars A-21, A-87, and A-122.

Options for Calculating Administrative/Indirect Costs (choose either A. OR B.)

Applicants can choose to use one of two methods to calculate allowable administrative costs – a Corporation fixed percentage method or a federally approved indirect cost rate method. Regardless of the option chosen, the Corporation's share of administrative costs is limited by statute to 5% of the total Corporation funds **actually expended** under this grant.

STATE COMMISSION 1% FIXED AMOUNT

Regardless of the method used to calculate administrative costs, the Maryland commission sets aside a portion of the Corporation share to use in administering its subgrantees. This amount must not exceed a one-fifth share of the maximum 5% Corporation share (i.e., allocating 1% as set aside for administering subgrantees and the remaining 4% for subgrantee administrative costs). The subgrantee's portion must not exceed the remaining 4% portion of the maximum Corporation share. Both the commission and subgrantee portions of the Corporation share of administrative costs should be requested in the subgrantee's budget.

To allocate the subgrantee share of the amount: Multiply the sum of the Corporation shares of Sections I and II by 4.21% (i.e. 0.0421). This is the maximum amount that the subgrantee can request as the Corporation share of administrative costs. Enter this amount as the Corporation share for Section III A or Section III B as appropriate, in the line item subgrantee share amount.

To allocate the Commission share of this amount: Multiply the sum of the Corporation shares of Sections I and II by 1.05% (i.e. 0.0105). This amount is the total the commission can retain to

administer the subgrant(s). Enter this amount as the Corporation share for Section IIIA or Section IIIB as appropriate, line item commission share amount.

A. CORPORATION FIXED PERCENTAGE METHOD

The Corporation fixed rate allows you to charge administrative costs up to a cap without a federally approved indirect cost rate and without documentation supporting the allocation. If you choose the Corporation Fixed Percentage Method (Section IIIA in eGrants), you may charge, for administrative costs, a fixed 5% of the total of the Corporation funds expended. In order to charge this fixed 5%, the grantee match for administrative costs may not exceed 10% of all direct cost expenditures.

- Multiply the sum of the Corporation funding shares of Sections I and II by 0.0526. This is the maximum amount you can request as Corporation share. Enter this amount as the Corporation share for Section III A.
- Then multiply the total (both Corporation and grantee share) of Sections I and II by 10% (0.10) and enter this amount as the grantee share for Section III A.
- Enter the sum of the Corporation and grantee shares under Total Amount.
-

B. FEDERALLY APPROVED INDIRECT COST RATE METHOD

If you have a Federally Approved Indirect Cost (IDC) rate and choose to use it, the IDC rate will constitute documentation of your administrative costs including the 5% maximum payable by the Corporation. Specify the Cost Type for which your organization has current documentation on file, i.e., Provisional, Predetermined, Fixed, or Final indirect cost rate. Supply your approved IDC rate (percentage) and the base upon which this rate is calculated (direct salaries, salaries and fringe benefits, etc.). It is at your discretion whether or not to claim your entire IDC rate to calculate administrative costs. If you choose to claim a lower rate, please include this rate in the Rate Claimed field.

- Determine the base amount of direct costs to which you will apply the IDC rate, including both the Corporation and Grantee's shares, as prescribed by your established rate agreement (i.e., based on salaries and benefits, total direct costs, or other). Then multiply the appropriate direct costs by the rate being claimed. This will determine the total amount of indirect costs allowable under the grant.
- Multiply the sum of the Corporation funding share in Sections I and II by 0.0526. This is the maximum amount you can claim as the Corporation share of indirect costs.
- Subtract the amount calculated in step b (the Corporation administrative share) from the amount calculated in step a (the Indirect Cost total). This is the amount the applicant can claim as grantee share for administrative costs.

Section IV. Increasing Grantee Overall Share of Total Budgeted Costs

Grantees are required to meet an overall matching rate that increases over time. You have the flexibility to meet the overall match requirements in any of the three budget areas, as long as the minimum match of 24% for the first three years, and the increasing minimum in years thereafter, are maintained. These matching requirements may be waived in limited circumstances.

Applying for Alternative Match

If you are requesting the alternative match as specified in 45 CFR § 2521.60(b), you must demonstrate that your program is either located in a rural county or in a severely economically distressed community as defined below. Also describe the efforts you have taken to raise the resources needed to meet the matching requirements in the Waiver Justification field in the Application Info Section of eGrants.

Please see 45 CFR §§ 2521.35–2521.90, for match and waiver requirements. You apply for the alternative match the year before it goes into effect. If approved, you will base your budget in your next application on the approved alternative match. The alternative match requirement will be in effect for whatever portion of the three-year project period remains, if you are approved for funding.

Program Location: Except when approved otherwise, the Corporation will determine the location of your program based on the legal applicant's address. If you believe that the legal applicant's address is not the appropriate way to consider the location of your program, you must provide relevant facts about your program location in your waiver request. The Corporation will, in its sole discretion, determine whether some other address is more appropriate for determining a program's location.

Rural County: In determining whether a program is rural, the Corporation will consider the most recent Beale code rating published by the U.S. Department of Agriculture for the county in which the program is located. Any program located in a county with a Beale code of 6, 7, 8 or 9 is eligible to apply for the alternative match requirement. See Attachment K for the Table of Beale codes.

Severely Economically Distressed County: In determining whether a program is located in a severely economically distressed county, the Corporation will consider the following list of county-level characteristics. See Attachment K for a list of website addresses where this publicly available information can be found.

- The county-level per capita income is less than or equal to 75 percent of the national average for all counties using the most recent census data or Bureau of Economic Analysis data;
- The county-level poverty rate is equal to or greater than 125 percent of the national average for all counties using the most recent census data; and
- The county-level unemployment is above the national average for all counties for the previous 12 months using the most recently available Bureau of Labor Statistics data.

BUDGET INSTRUCTIONS FOR EDUCATION AWARD PROGRAMS

These instructions apply only to applicants for Education Award Program funding.

EAP applicants may only request a fixed amount of funding per MSY. Therefore, EAP applicants are not required to complete a detailed budget. In addition, the matching requirements in 45 CFR §§ 2521.40– 2521.95 do not apply to EAP applicants.

Budget Section II. AmeriCorps Member Positions

Member Positions

Identify the number of Education Award members you are requesting by category (i.e. full-time, half-time, reduced half-time, quarter-time, minimum-time) and list under the column labeled #w/o Allow (without CNCS-funded living allowance.) Leave all other columns blank.

The total number of member service years (MSY) will automatically calculate at the bottom of the Member Positions chart, per the following example:

Amounts of fixed awards are based on the member service years which are calculated as follows:

Member Positions	Calculation	MSY
_____ Full-time (1700 hours)	(_____ members x 1.000)	= _____
_____ 1-Year Half-time (900 hours)	(_____ members x 0.500)	= _____
_____ 2-Year Half-time (1 st Year) (generally 450 hours)	(_____ members x 0.500)	= _____
_____ 2-Year Half-time (2 nd Year) (generally 450 hours)	(_____ members x 0.000)*	= _____
_____ Reduced Half-time (675 hours)	(_____ members x 0.3810)	= _____
_____ Quarter-time (450 hours)	(_____ members x 0.2646)	= _____
_____ Minimum-time (300 hours)	(_____ members x 0.2117)	= _____
Total MSY		_____

* Grantees receive the total amount for 2-Year Half-time members in the first year. Therefore, 2-Year Half-time members serving in their second year are not included in the calculation for funds.

Total # of MSYs _____ x MSY amount (up to \$600)_____ = Total Grant Request \$_____

Fixed Award

Under “Calculation,” you will enter the calculation for your grant request. Applicants may request up to \$600 per member service year (MSY).

Display your calculation in the following format:

Type the total amount requested in the “Total Amount” & “CNCS Share” columns. Leave the “Grantee Share” blank. See example below:

Purpose	Calculation	Total Amount	CNCS Share	Grantee Share	edit	del
Program Grant Request	47.5 MSY X \$600/MSY	\$19,000	\$19,000	\$0	view	
Subtotal		\$19,000	\$19,000	\$0		

INSTRUCTIONS FOR PLANNING GRANT APPLICATIONS

The AmeriCorps regulations include the selection criteria used to select applications for funding and other pertinent information (see Table 1, below).

Table 1: Program Requirements in the AmeriCorps Regulations

Requirements and Selection	Citation in the AmeriCorps Regulations
Member Service Activities	§2520.20 - §2520.55
Prohibited Activities	§2520.65
Tutoring Programs	§2522.900-2522.950
Matching Funds	§2521.35-2521.90
Member Benefits	§2522.240-2522.250
Calculating Cost Per Member Service Year (MSY)	§2522.485
Performance Measures	§2522.500-2522.650
Evaluation	§2522.500-2522.540 and §2522.700-2522.740
Selection Criteria and Selection Process	§2522.400-2522.475

Submitting Your Application in eGrants

Your application consists of the following components. Please make sure to complete each one.

- I. Applicant Info
- II. Application Info
- III. Narratives
- IV. Performance Measures
- V. Documents
- VI. Budget
- VII. Review and Submit
- VIII. Survey on Ensuring Equal Opportunity for Applicants (Optional)

In eGrants, before Starting Section I, you will need to:

- Start a new Grant Application
- Select a Program Area (AmeriCorps)
- Select a NOFA (Commission AmeriCorps State Formula FY 2009)
- Select Maryland
- Select the Maryland Prime Application ID

I. Applicant Info

In eGrants, complete the Applicant Info Section (Attachment B). This section is particularly important for Corporation data collection and evaluation. Please take the time to reflect your program activities accurately in this section.

- In the Program Info Section, select existing program, or enter new if you are applying for the first time.
- If you are a new program, enter your contact information into the fields that appear.
- Select a primary Program Model, and a secondary Program Model, if appropriate.
- Then select characteristics that fit your project under Program Design, Program Location, and Program Focus. Enter or select a Program Director and Program Website URL.

II. Application Info

Information entered in the Applicant Info, Application Info, and Budget sections will populate the SF 424 Facesheet. If you are submitting your application in hard copy, you will find the SF 424 in Attachment A.

In the Application Info Section enter:

- Areas affected by your program.
- Enter requested project period start and end dates. You may not request a program start date earlier than July 15, 2009.
- If you are delinquent on any federal debt.
- State Application Identifier: Enter N/A.
- State Single Point of Contact: pre-filled No, this is not applicable.
- If you plan to request a waiver of the volunteer leveraging or match requirements.

III. Narratives

The narrative section of the application is your opportunity to convince reviewers that your project meets the selection criteria. Below are some general recommendations to help you present your project in a way the reviewers will find compelling and persuasive.

- Lead from your program strengths and be explicit. Do not make the mistake of trying to stretch your program description to fit each strategic initiative, special consideration, and priority articulated in the regulations or the *Request for Proposals*. Focus on the special considerations and priorities that apply to your program.
- Be clear and succinct. Reviewers are not interested in jargon, boilerplate, rhetoric, or exaggeration. They are interested in learning precisely what you intend to do, and how your project responds to the selection criteria presented below.
- Avoid circular reasoning. The problem you are addressing should not be described as the lack of the program you are proposing.
- Explain how. Avoid simply stating that the criteria will be met.
- Don't make assumptions. Even if you have received funding from the Corporation in the past, do not assume your reviewers know anything about you, your program, your partners, or your beneficiaries. Avoid overuse of acronyms.

- Use an impartial proofreader. Before you submit your application, let someone who is completely unfamiliar with your project read and critique the project narrative.

In eGrants, you will enter text for Section A. Rationale and Approach, B. Member Outputs and Outcomes, C. Community Outputs and Outcomes, D. Organizational Capacity, E. Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy, and F. Evaluation Plan. You may not exceed 71,000 characters in these three sections combined. The character count includes spaces and punctuation.

Please note that the Narratives Section also includes fields for Clarification Information, Amendment Justification, and Continuation Changes. These are not required fields. They will be used to enter information for clarification following review, request amendments once a grant is awarded, and enter changes in the narrative in continuation requests. Please enter N/A in these fields.

The selection criteria from the AmeriCorps regulations are included in the ruled boxes below. Reviewers will assess your application against the selection criteria. The bullets that follow the criteria are merely recommendations on how to best respond to the criteria.

Please provide a narrative of no more than ten pages (approximately 40,000 characters) that addresses the following elements:

RATIONALE AND APPROACH

- Describe why you are applying for a planning grant and what you hope to achieve during the one year planning period.
- Include the need you plan to address and documentation of the need.
- Describe what AmeriCorps members will be doing to meet the need, and the target communities you will serve.
- Provide a detailed description of your planning process and a timeline for
- planning activities.
- Describe how you will use the planning period to develop your capacity to effectively manage a national, multi-site AmeriCorps operating program including:
- Establishing systems and processes for sound programmatic and fiscal oversight.
- Creating a process for selecting operating and service sites (if applicable) that will ensure the most appropriate and capable organizations are selected.
- Planning orientation and training for operating and service sites (if applicable).
- Planning orientation and training for AmeriCorps members.
- Ensuring you have the ability to provide or secure effective technical assistance.

MEMBER OUTCOMES AND OUTPUTS (N/A)

COMMUNITY OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES (N/A)

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPABILITY

- Provide a brief history of your organization including the year it was established and your
- funding history with the Corporation, if applicable. Describe your ability to successfully plan a national AmeriCorps program.
- Unless your organization is brand new, describe your record of accomplishment.
- Discuss your prior experience in the proposed area of programming and other examples of your organization's leadership in the community.
- Describe your organization's management and staff structure and the role the board of directors, administrators, and staff members will play in the planning process.
- Special Circumstances: In applying these criteria to each proposal, reviewers may also take into account the following circumstances of individual organizations:
 - The age of your organization and its rate of growth; and
 - Whether your organization serves a resource-poor community, such as a rural or remote community, a community with a high poverty rate, or a community with a scarcity of philanthropic and corporate resources.

If you feel that any of these circumstances have an impact on your organizational capability that has not already been discussed, please describe it.

COST EFFECTIVENESS AND BUDGET ADEQUACY

Describe your plans to develop a cost-effective program including how you will develop diverse non-federal resources that will support your program implementation and sustainability.

Discuss the adequacy of your budget to support the planning process including your 24% or more commitments of match (cash and in-kind) you have for the planning process, and how you will secure any additional commitments you need for the planning grant.

EVALUATION SUMMARY OR PLAN (N/A)

AMENDMENT JUSTIFICATION (N/A)

CLARIFICATION INFORMATION (N/A)

CONTINUATION UPDATE (N/A)

IV. Performance Measures

Performance measures are not required for planning grants. Please enter Service Categories, and then enter N/A or 0 in the fields for one aligned performance measure, which is required in order to submit. Otherwise eGrants will continue to give error messages and prevent submission.

Service Categories

In eGrants, the service categories are located in the Performance Measures Section. In this section you will select issue areas and service categories that describe your program activities. First select an issue area, and then choose service categories from the pull down menu. When you have selected all applicable service categories, indicate which service category is the primary and which is the secondary in importance to your program. Only one service category can be indicated as the primary, and one as the secondary.

V. Documents

(No documents are required for Planning Grants.)

VI. Budget

Please follow the Budget Instructions and Detailed Budget Instructions for Operating Grants With the following exceptions:

- C. 2. Member Travel: N/A for Planning Grants
- D. Equipment: N/A for Planning Grants
- E. Supplies: N/A for Planning Grants
- G. 2. Member Training: N/A for Planning Grants
- H. Evaluation: N/A for Planning Grants
- Section II. Member Costs: N/A for Planning Grants

VII. Review and Submit

Follow instructions for Operating Grants.

VIII. Survey on Ensuring Equal Opportunity for Applicants (Optional)

Follow instructions for Operating Grants.